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EXAMINER

HYLINSKI, STEVEN J

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/763,638	Applicant(s) JOSHI ET AL.	
	Examiner STEVEN J. HYLINSKI	Art Unit 3714	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 August 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13, 15-25 and 27-37 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13, 15-25, 27-37 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments filed 08/25/02008, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 1-13, 15-25, and 27-37 under Mayeroff, alone or in view of Baerlocher and Walker, have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of US 6,309,300 to Glavich, alone or in combination with Mayeroff and the '807 and '918 Walker references.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-2, 4-5, 7, 9, 29, 31-32, 34, and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by US 6,309,300 to Glavich.

Re Claims 1, 9, 29, 36

Glavich discloses a method for playing a wagering game having a special payout, the method comprising:

presenting a basic game (Abstract, a main game) having a plurality of randomly selected outcomes including a special-payout outcome (Fig. 1 shows the main game being a 3 reel slot game); accepting a basic wager from a player for the basic game between a minimum and maximum amount (Fig. 2, a wager is received for the main

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game in block **212**. Col. 3 Lines 65-67 and Col. 4 Lines 1-2 disclose that optionally, the game may allow the player to make "an additional wager or side wager related to the bonusing feature".) presenting an additional, separate side-wager option for a player to place an additional side-wager distinct from the accepted basic wager, the side-wager option requiring a side-wager amount in addition to the accepted basic wager (Again see Col. 3 Lines 65-67 and Col. 4 Lines 1-2); in response to a player not choosing the side-wager option, providing the player with a first probability greater than zero of achieving the special-payout outcome (Columns 3 and 4 disclose that in the selection-type bonus game, the number of items associated with the number of selectable items, or in other words the number of selectable items "M" that will cause a winning bonus outcome when selected by the player, can be varied based on the same factors that "N" can be. As discussed in Col. 3 Lines 65-67, "N" can be based on the side wagers related to the bonusing feature. Hence "M" can be selected based on the side wager related to the bonusing feature as well. Specifically, Col. 3 Lines 65-67 and Col. 4 Lines 1-2 state that "in some embodiments the player may be given an option to make an additional wager or side wage related to the bonusing feature, e.g., for the purpose of increasing the value of N." Col. 5 Lines 26-42 then expounds on this concept, stating that "The M items are selected or calculated 232 in any number of fashions. In other embodiments, the M associated items may be selected using factors similar to those described above in connection with selection of the value N [...] including selecting based on the amount of wagers [...] The values of Z and N, and the items which are associated with some or all of the N selectable items, all affect the

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amount of bonusing prizes, averaged over a period of time.") in response to the player choosing the side-wager option, providing the player with a second probability of achieving the special-payout outcome, the second probability being greater than the first probability (see discussion above, the number of selectable items N having "associated items M", can be increased based on a side wager, for the purpose of "affecting the amount of bonusing prizes averaged over a period of time"); conducting the basic game with the first probability if the player does not choose the side-wager option (it inherent that if a side wager is not chosen, the game will be conducted according to the base wager required to play the game (**212** in Fig. 2), or the second probability if the player chooses the side-wager option (if Glavich's game can be conducted with a side wager that affects bonusing, in the way that a side wager increases the number of selectable items having bonus outcomes associated with them, the probability of achieving a bonus outcome in the given number of picks has increased); and in response to conducting, crediting the player the special payout when the special-payout outcome occurs in the basic game (Col. 6 Lines 37-39, if a selectable bonus item has a prize associated with it, the prize value increments on the player's machine).

Re Claims 2, 5, 7, 32, 34

The base game is shown in Fig. 1 as being a slot machine having traditional symbol-bearing reels. **132** shows a typical slot machine pay table for different base game outcomes that can occur.

Re Claims 4 and 31,

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Glavich discloses that the associated items associated with some of the player-selectable items can be "additional plays of the main game". A free play of a main game constitutes a "bonus game" in the art of electronic casino gaming.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 3, 12-13, 15-16, 18, 23, 25, 27-28, 30, and 37 are rejected under 35

U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Glavich.

Re Claims 3, 23, and 30,

Glavich discloses in Col. 4 Lines 44-52 that the associated items associated with the player-selectable items of the bonus game can include monetary prizes. Glavich thus obviously encompasses providing progressive monetary prizes as associated items.

Re Claims 12, 25, and 27-28, and 37

Glavich discloses that there are various types of associated items that can be associated with the user-selectable items in a bonus round. For example see Fig. 1, in which five user-selectable items are shown. Each of these user-selectable items may, or may not, have one of various types of associated items associated with it. Glavich discloses in Col. 4 Lines 44-67 and Col. 5 Lines 1-16, what some of these types of associated items may be, such as multipliers, bonus prize values, demerits, free plays,

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etc. Glavich also discloses in Col. 5 Lines 28-38 that the associated items can be selected based on "factors similar to those described above in connection with selection of the value N" including "selecting based on the amount of wagers". We know from the discussion above that the "factors similar to those described above in connection with selection of the value N" also include "additional or side wagers". One of skill in the art would recognize that a system in which the types of hidden prizes associated with user-selectable items can be varied based on side wagers and additional wagers" would obviously encompass varying the types of hidden prizes when a max wager occurs, because a max wager is the highest form of an "additional wager". Because Glavich states that the items can be varied based on such factors as varying wager types or amounts, and because many different types of functions that can be associated with the items exist in his system, such as bonus values, free plays, multipliers, etc., more than one type of award could be obtainable only when a max and/or side wager is selected, and not available when a max and/or side wager is not selected. For example, Glavich's system obviously encompasses the possibility of having a first payout of multiplier functions, and a second payout of free games, when a max wager or side wager have been utilized, but neither being available when a max wager or side wager has not been utilized.

Re Claim 13,

See the rejections of claims 3 and 4 above.

Re Claim 15,

Glavich has disclosed, as discussed above, that his system is capable of allowing the user to select side wagers, and/or wagers otherwise increased above the base level. Therefore Glavich's system must have some sort of user input devices in order for his system to be functional. These selections must be in the form of mechanical buttons, as are old and well-known in the art, or in the form of other I/O features such as icons on a touch screen, which would also meet the limitation of buttons. Glavich discloses that although a keypad can be used to enter wagers, "other components such as buttons, [or] touchscreens and the like can also be used." (Col. 2 Lines 66-67 and Col. 3 Lines 1-2.

Re Claim 16 and 18,

See the rejection of claim 2 above.

6. Claims 6, 17, and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Glavich, in view of US 6,186,894 to Mayeroff.

Re Claim 6, 17, and 33,

Glavich shows in Fig. 1 that his base game can be a slot machine having traditional symbol-bearing reels. However, Glavich is silent on the symbols on the reels being able to include symbols from a deck of playing cards.

The Mayeroff reference was discussed in the previous Office Action, the discussion of which is incorporated by reference herein. Mayeroff teaches an analogous gaming machine having a slot machine base game, in which the symbols on the reels can be any symbols representing a common theme" (See Col. 6 Lines 47-54 of Mayeroff).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, that incorporating the well-known teaching of Mayeroff regarding what types of symbols can be used on slot reels, into Glavich's analogous slot reel base game, would yield predictable and non-inventive results.

7. Claims 8, 10-11, and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Glavich, in view of US 2004/0166918 to Walker.

Re Claims 8, 10-11, and 35,

Glavich's invention, which has the purpose of altering the bonus payout to a player based on changing the number of wins associated with a plurality of symbols, is applied to a selection-type bonus game in the exemplary embodiment. However, one of skill in the art would readily be able to apply the same teaching of altering the number of winning symbols among a group of selectable game symbols, into a slot reel game, because the same result of the game controller being able to selectably alter the bonus payout to a player over a period of time, would remain the same, and also because applying Glavich's teaching to slot reels would not create any results outside of what would be expected by one of ordinary skill in the art. Walker, in fact, discloses a method an apparatus for changing the number of winning symbols on slot reels in order to modify the payout (Walker Paragraph 24, wherein the "game play parameter" includes the number of symbols on each reel, and the probability of the character appearing on a given handle pull. Paragraphs 103-104 of Walker further state that the gaming device, or the casino controlling it, can vary the game play parameters during play to control the number of bonus symbols on each reel which initiate a bonus round".) Thus it is known

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in the art how Glavich's invention could be readily applied to slot reels. At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art that applying Glavich's teaching of modifying the number of symbols associated with a bonus outcome, to slot reels, as Walker discloses is known, would have predictable and non-inventive results.

8. Claims 19-22 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Glavich, in view of US 2003/0064807 to Walker.

Re Claim 19,

Glavich discloses that the gaming terminal has the two options of being available for the special payout, those two options being the max wager and side wager discussed in the rejection of claim 12 above. Glavich also discloses the gaming terminal having signage located above and coupled to the gaming terminal, the signage displaying the special payout and for receiving a signal that the gaming terminal is eligible to win a special payout (See Col. 3 Lines 5-30 of Glavich, in which he discloses that the display that is used to provide the base and bonus games of the instant invention, the bonus game including the modifiable outcomes that can be based on whether a side wager or other type of additional wager including a max wager has been selected, as discussed in the rejection of claims 1 and 12 above). Glavich states that the gaming machine used in his device may have "a communication device" for remote accounting purposes. Glavich also states that "the present invention can also be implemented in many other types of gaming devices (Col. 2 Lines 53-55". However, Glavich is silent on the gaming device being linked with other gaming devices.

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Walker discloses an analogous system comprising networked casino gaming devices for playing games of chance including slot games and card games (Abstract and Paragraph 42). Walker teaches the plurality of casino gaming machines (Fig. 1A, gaming devices **104, 106, 108**) being in combination with at least one other gaming terminal (Fig. 1A, the gaming devices are networked) for conducting wagering games (Paragraph 42), the gaming terminals and the signage being a gaming system (each of the gaming devices (Fig. 1A and Paragraphs 30-32, a system for linked game play wherein players can compete as a group or against each other, and Paragraph 50, wherein each of the gaming devices has one or more video output devices).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made, to have incorporated Walker's teaching of a single gaming machine being used in a network in order to interact with other gaming machines, into the slot machine with bonusing taught by Glavich, because networked game play is old and well-known in the art, and also because many gamblers enjoy the social interaction that linked gaming provides (Walker, Paragraph 16).

Re Claims 20-21,

Glavich's gaming devices having an output device controller for controlling their output device(s) for controlling a bonus outcome, the output device controller being controlled by a gaming terminal controller (See Glavich Fig. 4, Microprocessor **412** controls the I/O device such as the Touchscreen **416**).

Re Claim 22,

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Glavich in view of Walker further teach a gaming system, wherein each of the plurality of gaming terminals are identical machines (Walker Paragraph 42, the gaming machines can be any gaming machine, including slots, poker, etc. Because each gaming machine can be any of the disclosed gaming machines, the system is inherently capable of supporting all of the machines being the same machine).

Re Claim 24,

Glavich discloses that his system can have bonus prize values associated with user-selectable items in his bonus game (Col. 6 Lines 37-40).

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure and is included in the attached Notice of References Cited.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to STEVEN J. HYLINSKI whose telephone number is (571)270-1995. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Thurs. 7:00a-5:30p.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Hotaling can be reached on 571-272-4437. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/John M Hotaling II/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3714

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